

Medicine Lake

National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations



Welcome



*This goose,
designed by J.N.
“Ding” Darling,
is the symbol
of the National
Wildlife Refuge
System.*

Welcome to Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, located in northeastern Montana in Sheridan and Roosevelt Counties. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 560 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System – a network of lands set aside to conserve wildlife and habitat for people today and for generations to come.

The 31,000 acre refuge is part of a unique plains ecosystem which offers many different recreational opportunities. Visitors are encouraged to enjoy wildlife observation and photography, hiking, bicycling, hunting, and fishing. If an activity is not listed below, it is not allowed. Please observe the regulations that have been established both to protect and conserve wildlife and their habitats, and to help you enjoy a safe visit.

Visitor Information

Refuge headquarters is open 7:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays. The Refuge, recreation areas, and Wildlife Drive are open sunrise to sunset. Note though, that the Wildlife Drive is closed during the state waterfowl season and during inclement weather – typically September 30 through January 1.

Protecting the Refuge

For the protection of wildlife, habitat and other visitors, please observe the following regulations unless otherwise stated:

- All vehicles must stay on designated roads and observe a 25 mph speed limit, unless posted otherwise.
- Mountain biking is permitted only on designated roads and trails.

- Possession/consumption of alcohol while hunting
- Trapping (without a valid Refuge permit) or baiting for any species
- The use of prerecorded or electronic game calls
- Field possession or use of toxic (lead) shot
- Hunting dog trials
- Commercial guiding and outfitting
- Shooting from, on, or across roads and road rights-of-way
- Retrieval of game from areas closed to hunting, without approval from a State or Federal wildlife officer

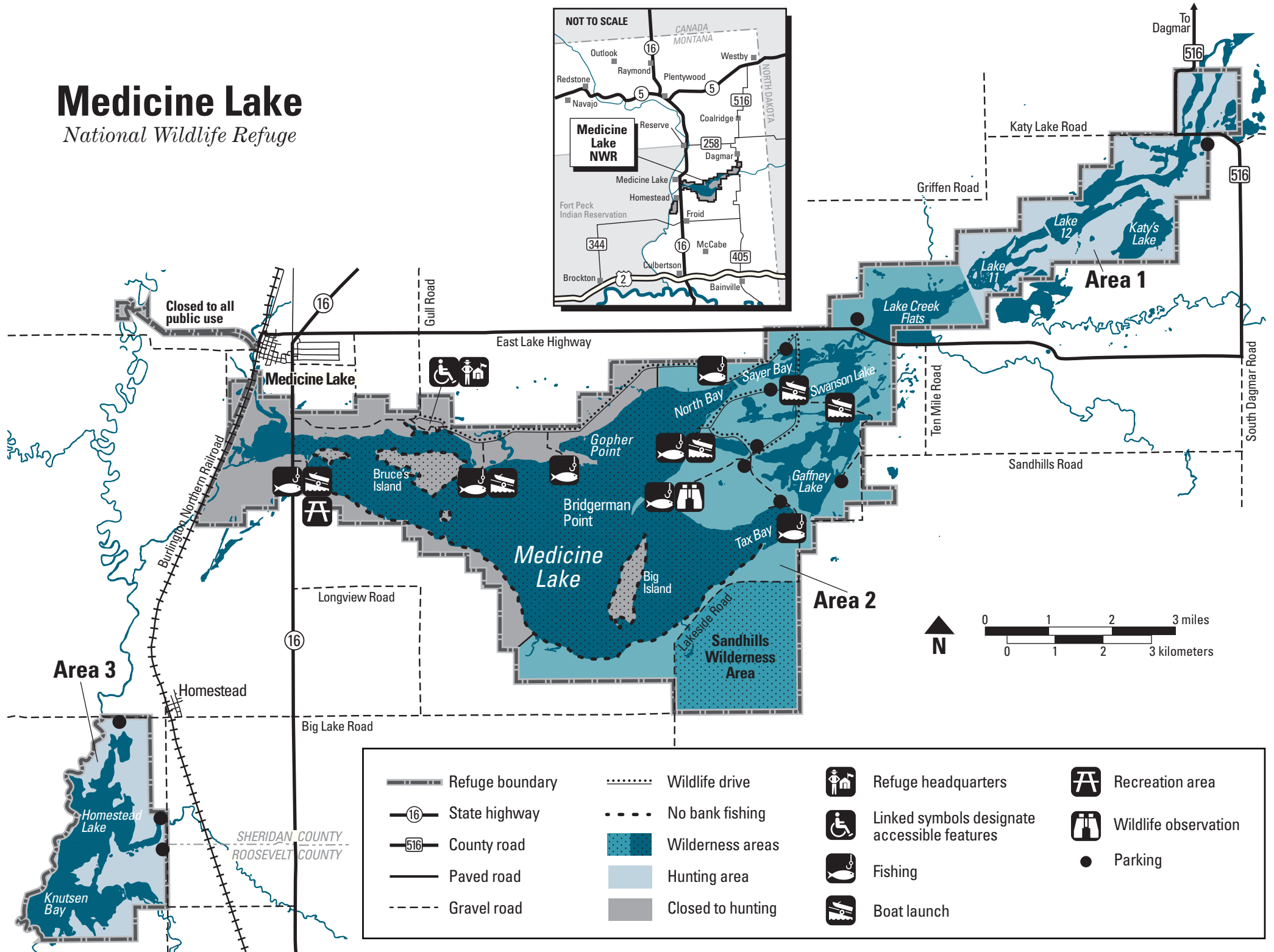
Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental disability. Dial 7-1-1 for a free connection to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from people with hearing and speech disabilities.

For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 406 / 789 2305, or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Medicine Lake

National Wildlife Refuge



We remind you to follow all State laws and to launch only from designated boat launches – refer to the Refuge map. Motorboats and sailboats are not allowed on the Refuge.

Open Boating Season:

- Medicine Lake – November 15 to September 15.
- Gaffney Lake, Sayer Bay, Swanson Lake, and Lake Creek Flats – During the waterfowl season

Fishing

Fishing is allowed on Medicine Lake (only) and all State of Montana fishing regulations apply.

- Fishing season runs from November 15 – September 15.
- Please consult the Refuge map for fishing access points.
- Please observe signs indicating areas closed to bank fishing, including all islands.
- Fish remains must be removed from the Refuge.
- Ice fishing shelters must be removed at the end of each day.

Hunting



Hunting is permitted on the Refuge in accordance with all State of Montana hunting regulations. Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with Refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and 50 CFR Part 32).

- The use of hunting dogs is allowed and encouraged during the State hunting season.

Prohibited Activities

- Accessible hunting blinds must be reserved – first come-first served basis. Check with Refuge staff for additional information on accessible hunting opportunities.
- Check with Refuge staff for information, permits, and maps for predator and furbearer hunting.
- Hunters are allowed to enter and return from hunting areas one hour before and one hour after legal shooting hours, to access and return from hunting areas.
- Areas 1 and 3 are open to the hunting of upland game bird, deer, and pronghorn from November 15 through the end of the State hunting season.
- Area 2 is open for duck, geese, coots, upland game bird, jackrabbits, deer, and pronghorn hunting, during the State hunting season.
- The use of non-toxic shot is required for all bird hunting on the Refuge.
- No cleaning of harvested animals in parking areas. Dispose of all waste properly – including cartridges and casings.
- Blinds, tree stands, decoys, and other personal property must be removed daily.

The following activities are prohibited at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Contact Refuge staff with any questions about activities not addressed in this brochure.

- The hunting of swan, crane, and other species not listed above

Wilderness

- The Diversion Canal is closed to all public use.
- Overnight camping and parking is prohibited.
- Open fires are not allowed.
- Swimming in Refuge waters is prohibited.
- Gas and charcoal grills are permitted in designated parking areas.
- Wood cutting or gathering is prohibited.
- Disturbing, injuring, or removing of plants, animals, natural objects, or artifacts is prohibited. These items are to be left for the enjoyment of all.
- Off-trail hiking and photography is prohibited from May 15 through August 15.
- Pets must be confined or leashed, and their waste must be properly disposed.
- Observe all posted regulations, including areas posted 'closed' to the public.

Medicine Lake and its islands east of the Highway 16 Bridge and the Sandhills are designated wilderness areas. The islands are closed to public access, unless otherwise posted; however, you are welcome to visit the Sandhills part of the wilderness area. Please remember that no mechanical or motorized equipment, or horses, are permitted within the designated wilderness area.

Boating

Non-motorized boating on Medicine Lake is a fun way to experience this unique and beautiful area.

Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge
223 North Shore Road
Medicine Lake, MT 59247
406 / 789 2305
406 / 789 2350 fax
medicinelake@fws.gov
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/medicine_lake

For State transfer relay service
TTY / Voice: 711

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

February 2017

